

REMARKS

Claims 3-7, 15-17, 51 and 215-218 are pending in the application. Claims 3-7 are rejected and claims 15-17, 51 and 215-218 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 3-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph for allegedly being indefinite. Specifically, it is the Examiner's position that if a SiO₂ layer is chosen for the first insulating interlayer, the choices with the wherein clause of the low-k material no longer are considered in this claimed structure. The Examiner questions whether the further language of "said low-k material layer comprises one of a ladder-type hydrogen siloxane layer and a porous ladder-type hydrogen siloxane layer" further limits the claimed structure. Additionally, it is the Examiner's position that if the SiO₂ layer is chosen for the selected structures, dependent claims 4-7 do not further limited the selected structure.

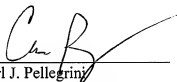
Applicants respectfully traverse the § 112, second paragraph rejection.

Applicants submit that claim 3, as currently amended, recites "said first insulating interlayer comprises at least one layer selected from the group consisting of a SiO₂ layer, a SiOF layer, a SiOC layer, a ladder-type hydrogen siloxane layer and a porous ladder-type hydrogen siloxane layer." Therefore, the Examiner's rejection with respect to claim 3 is now moot. Further, claims 4-6 further limit the ladder-type hydrogen siloxane of claim 3, and claim 7 recites a device of claim 3 further comprising a mask insulating layer. Accordingly, claims 4-7 are also patentable, at least by virtue of their dependence from claim 3.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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